

# Puget Sound Partnership

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## SCIENCE PANEL CONFERENCE CALL \*

Date: Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Time: 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

### Meeting Summary

#### Science Panel Members Present on Conference Call

- Tim Quinn
- Jan Newton
- Bob Johnston
- Joel Baker
- Guy Gelfenbaum
- Frank Shipley
- Katharine Wellman

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Meeting opened at 1:05 p.m. by Science Panel Chair, Joel Baker.

Joel reviewed a list of upcoming meetings and events:

- Next Science Panel meeting - April 15 and 16
- Two-day Indicator Workshop - next Monday and Tuesday (March 17 & 18)  
Several Panel members are planning to attend this workshop
- The Topic Forum dates will be firmed up within the next week
- Risk Assessment workshop may be scheduled on the 16<sup>th</sup> but could change due to the Science Panel meeting being two days

Joel reported that the Science Panel meeting will be on the 15<sup>th</sup> and possibly 16<sup>th</sup> depending on how many items need to be on the agenda. Due to schedules, the meeting will be all day on the 15<sup>th</sup> and just half-day on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

Joel reported that three products from the indicators work will be provided by Tracy Collier for review. The Panel should receive this information about April 4<sup>th</sup>. A subcommittee will be the main reviewers but all the Science Panel members will also be able to provide their comments. Tracy will provide the Panel with a briefing at the April 15 Science Panel meeting. This is an important product and so all the Science Panel members should review if possible.

The Panel discussed the desire to see the comments received from scientists that came to the workshop groups; to be able to use some of this information in development of a peer review process and to develop the cross linkages and guidance for the Science

Panel review. The Panel was informed that summaries from all the Action Area meetings will be posted on the Web page and will include comments received.

Other upcoming meetings include:

- March 25 Risk Assessment Steering Committee meeting
- March 26 South Sound Science Symposium at the Landmark Convention Center in Tacoma
- April 4 Federal Caucus meeting

The Panel discussed the February 29 Conference Call Summary. One change requested was to strike the sentence on the second page that begins with "Trina's company is". The Panel was also concerned with blanket statements and would like to add "the panel discussed." There wasn't anything wrong with the summary; the Panel just didn't feel that it captured the essence of discussion. The Panel will get comments to Tammy Owings so she can make revisions and the Panel can approve the summary at the April 15 meeting.

The Panel then discussed documents and what should and shouldn't be posted on the Web page. They also discussed using the share point site for early review of documents and the need to mark them as "draft." The Science Panel should have the opportunity to reach agreement on items before they are posted. Sarah Brace informed the Science Panel that she has uploaded informative documents and reports on to the share point site.

#### Operations of the Science Panel

Reviewed the agenda, noting that the meeting is not being recorded but notes are being taken. This is an open public meeting.

*Review of Draft Science Panel Policy Re: Conflict of Interest* – Joel Baker led this discussion. (See meeting materials for details.)

The Panel discussed the proposed conflict of interest policy. They discussed what the definition of a private gain should be. Panel members had differing thoughts about where to draw this line. Some felt that it could be construed as "private gain" if an employer received a grant and the money went into a pool from which salaries were drawn. Others consider it a conflict of interest if someone were listed as the Principle Investigator on the grant or were involved in the process.

General agreement was reached that there are two types of conflicts:

- An actual conflict of interest: any action, decision, or recommendation that would be to the private (distinct from that of the general public) benefit of a Panel member or a relative of a Panel member, or a benefit to a business or organization with which a Panel member is associated.

- An apparent conflict of interest: any action, decision, or recommendation that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the Panel member stands to benefit from the action, decision, or recommendation.

Several of the members are conducting research projects in Puget Sound but will not be on the review panel of an affiliated proposal or product. It was agreed that Panel members would recuse themselves from reviewing and voting on proposals or products that they were involved in developing or that were submitted by their agency or employer.

The Panel needs to continue being transparent on the issues but still be able to discuss the programs and priorities.

The Panel asked for an Attorney General opinion on the conflict of interest statement. They suggested Sarah provide the draft statement to the Assistant Attorney General to see if the proposed conflict of interest statement is appropriate, adequate, and meets legal requirements.

Joel discussed the memo he received from Trina concerning the conflict of interest and her association with Northern Economics. Northern Economics is one of the groups who received a convenience contract with the Puget Sound Partnership prior to Trina becoming part of the Science Panel. Northern Economics has a scope of work for assisting with the Topic Forums. In the scope of work Trina would be a paid employee and has been identified in some portions of this work. She will recuse herself from the review of the work coming from the Topic Forum workshop that the Science Panel will be reviewing. Shill will not act as the Topic Forum Lead but will be the Science Panel liaison. Trina will review both the list of invitees and questions being asked at the workshop.

The Panel discussed the enabling legislation and how some of the conflict was built into the legislation. Trina reported that she is no longer involved in this process and asked to have the paragraph removed that discusses this from the conflict of interest statement.

Bill Ruckelshaus talked about the distinction between policy and advice. He clarified with the Science Panel that the Leadership Council wants their advice and expertise but that the Leadership Council will make the policy decisions. The Panel can't get itself so twisted up on the conflict of interest issue that it becomes less useful to the Leadership Council.

#### Operating Procedures

The Panel doesn't have time to discuss the operating procedures at this meeting so asked Panel members to send Jan and Joel comments on the operating procedures and the Panel will then discuss at the next meeting.

Initial Discussion of Strategic Science Plan Outline

Guy Gelfenbaum and Jan Newton led this discussion. (See meeting materials for details.)

Jan reviewed the draft Strategic Science Plan outline with the Panel.

The Panel discussed the draft outline and the need to develop a plan that can be sustained over time. There is a need to take a long-term perspective so that science continues to be important in the overall Puget Sound.

The general impressions on this first draft of the Plan included:

- Most agreed it was a great start
- Needs more structuring for the policy engagement – need to be up front on how the Plan is linking policy and adaptive management as well as how resources are spent
- Missing section on social marketing and economic issues
- Need more feedback between science and communication
- Goals are too vague
- Need objectives to be able to create scientific hypothesis
- Would avoid “best available science” as it has become a cliché – need to say this is the current data understanding
- Needs to be link between the science and policy
- Want more emphasis in the guiding principals – this is where the science can get linked into the overall process
- Need accountability addressed

The Panel decided to have a subcommittee to work on the next revision. The subcommittee consisted of Joel Baker, Jan Newton, Tim Quinn, and Trina Wellman. Sarah will schedule a meeting for this subcommittee.

**Public Comment**

Tim Towey, associated with Seakeepers, talked about the data system they have in place; this program is funded by yacht owners.

Jan Newton thanked Tim for providing comments and is familiar with the group and would be willing to be the liaison with this group

Continued Discussion on the Strategic Plan Outline:

The Panel continued discussion of what is needed in the Strategic Science Plan and Biennial Work Plan and how this work should get completed. They agreed the Plan will need to be comprehensive and it will take a lot of work to get it completed within the

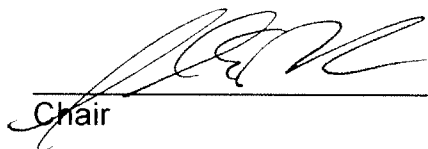
next year. The Panel will need to agree on the outline of what should be in the Plan and then figure out how to get the actual writing done, could be staff or consultants.

The Biennial Work Plan needs to be completed in time for this budget cycle.

Joel thanked Jan and Guy for taking the lead on drafting the outline. The subcommittee will work on making changes discussed during this meeting and then the Panel will have another conference call meeting to review the revisions before the April 15 regular meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Science Panel Approval

  
Chair

4/15/2008  
Date